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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
BUREAU OF MARKETS,
CHARLES J. BRAND CHIEF,

POTATO GRADES RECOMMENDED

BY THE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND THE
UNITED STATES FOOD ADMINISTRATION.

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The present prospect for a record-breaking crop of potatoes this season, the general situation with regard to food supplies, the over-taxed condition of the transportation facilities of the country, and the recent ruling of the Federal Reserve Board¹ that member banks are authorized to make loans against warehouse receipts for potatoes, properly graded, packed, stored, and insured, emphasize the importance of adopting uniform grades for this product.

For several years the Bureau of Markets of the United States Department of Agriculture has been investigating and demonstrat-

¹ In Federal Reserve Bulletin, Vol. 3, No. 8 (Aug. 1, 1917), pages 614-615, is contained the following statement regarding potatoes as security:

"In reply to your inquiry, I would refer you to the regulations of the Federal Reserve Board, series of 1917, and particularly to regulation A, relating to rediscounts under section 13 of the Federal reserve Act of note, drafts, and bills of exchange.

"Section VII of this regulation relates to commodity paper, which can be rediscounted for a member bank under the general terms of the regulation, but which may, if it complies with the conditions laid down in this section, be discounted at a preferential rate, which is now 3½ per cent in most of the Federal reserve districts.

"Potatoes, properly graded and packed and stored in a weatherproof and responsible warehouse, as evidenced by its receipt, would undoubtedly constitute a readily marketable, nonperishable staple within the meaning of the regulation. The member bank making loans against warehouse receipts for potatoes properly insured would, of course, have to satisfy itself as to the margin of its security and the conditions of warehousing, but after having done so, and making the loan, it could rediscount such paper with the Federal Reserve Bank for periods not longer than 90 days."

This ruling was made at the solicitation of Mr. Lou D. Sweet, of the United States Food Administration.

ing the practicability of marketing potatoes by grade.¹ This work has been conducted in most of the principal producing sections of the country and has consisted of field tests in the grading and packing of potatoes and experiments in the marketing of the graded as compared with the ungraded product. The results show conclusively that the marketing of potatoes by grade is desirable, practicable, and economical.

The Department of Agriculture and the United States Food Administration jointly recommend and urge the adoption of the following grades,² which, in their opinion, will meet the needs of the Federal Reserve Board, as well as those of growers, dealers, and consumers:

U. S. GRADE NO. 1.

This grade shall consist of sound potatoes of similar varietal characteristics, which are practically free^a from dirt or other foreign matter, frost injury, sunburn, second growth, cuts, scab, blight, dry rot, and damage caused by disease, insects, or mechanical means. The minimum diameter^b of potatoes of the round varieties shall be one and seven-eighths ($1\frac{7}{8}$) inches, and of potatoes of the long varieties one and three-fourths ($1\frac{3}{4}$) inches. In order to allow for variations incident to commercial grading and handling, five per centum by weight of any lot may be under the prescribed size, and, in addition, three per centum by weight of any such lot may be below the remaining requirements of this grade.

U. S. GRADE NO. 2.

This grade shall consist of potatoes of similar varietal characteristics, which are practically free^a from frost injury and decay, and which are free from serious damage^c caused by dirt or other foreign matter, sunburn, second growth, cuts, scab, blight, dry rot, or other disease, insects, or mechanical means. The minimum diameter^b shall be one and one-half ($1\frac{1}{2}$) inches. In order to allow for variations incident to commercial grading and handling, five per centum by weight of any lot may be under the prescribed size, and, in addition, five per centum by weight of any such lot may be below the remaining requirements of this grade.

¹ Commercial Handling, Grading, and Marketing of Potatoes, by C. T. More, U. S. Department of Agriculture. Farmers' Bulletin No. 753, 1916.

² The work upon which the grades recommended herein are based was conducted by Mr. C. T. More, assisted by Messrs. Truax, Ayres, and Allewelt, of the Bureau of Markets.

^a, ^b, and ^c refer to explanations of grade requirements found on page 4.

EXPLANATIONS OF GRADE REQUIREMENTS.

^a "Practically free" means that the appearance shall not be injured to an extent readily apparent upon casual examination, and that any damage from the causes mentioned can be removed by the ordinary processes of paring without appreciable increase in waste over that which would occur if the potato were perfect. Loss of the outer skin (epidermis) only shall not be considered as an injury to the appearance.

^b "Diameter" means the greatest dimension at right angles to the longitudinal axis.

^c "Free from serious damage" means that the appearance shall not be injured to the extent of more than twenty per centum of the surface, and that any damage from the causes mentioned can be removed by the ordinary processes of paring without increase in waste of more than ten per centum by weight over that which would occur if the potato were perfect.

NOTE.

For the purpose of these recommendations no attempt has been made to provide grades for potatoes of extra fancy quality and size, such as special baking potatoes used in dining cars, hotels, and restaurants, or for lots composed of potatoes of different varietal characteristics, or for potatoes under the minimum diameter and other requirements of the U. S. Grade No. 2.

Potatoes of U. S. Grade No. 1, unless shipped in bulk, should be placed only in new, clean sacks or barrels, which should be well filled, securely sewed or covered, and, in addition to any necessary statements or marks, should be plainly marked "U. S. No. 1." Containers of potatoes of No. 2 grade, also, should be plainly marked "U. S. No. 2."

